

A
Faithful ACCOUNT
OF THE
L I F E
OF
Christopher Layer, Esq;
BARRISTER at LAW;
FROM
His BIRTH to his EXECUTION,
FOR
High Treason; and his last Behaviour.

Interpers'd with several ORIGINAL PAPERS.

By a GENTLEMAN of *Norwich*, his School-Fellow.

*Virtus repulsæ nescia sordida,
Intaminatis fulget honoribus:
Nec sumit aut ponit secures
Arbitrio popularis auro.*

HON.

L O N D O N:

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(Price, Six Pence.)

Final Account
of the
Life

Christopher Rogers, Esq;
Baronet at Law;



His Birth

High Treasurer of the Exchequer
Intendant of the Navy and Ordnance

By

John Rogers, Esq;
Clerk of the Council

London
Printed by J. Rogers, at the Sign of the Crown, in St. Dunstons Church-yard, near St. Dunstons Church, in the County of Middlesex.



INTRODUCTION.

I HAVE always been of Opinion that the Study of Biography is as useful as it is entertaining; for if we view the Actions of Mankind with an impartial Eye, we shall find that whoever does any Thing egregiously remarkable in its Kind, that grows the Talk of the Town by being long the Subject of Examination among Persons of higher Degree, is sure to grow the Object of Popularity. For as all Men will divide in their Opinions upon any particular Thing, that is remarkably brought to the Test of a publick Question, the Eyes of all Men will infallibly be very much upon that Thing and more upon the Person that was the first Foundation of such an Inquiry. Let
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the Source be bad or good it must have its Torrent running from it, and so a remarkable publick Cause, be it good or bad, must have a remarkable publick Effect, in which the People, divided in their Opinions, form what we call a Popularity, with Regard to the Person that is in Question. This is the same with both Sexes, and happens accordingly to them. Thus *Sally Salisbury*, by her glorious Infamy, as I may call it, by her distinguish'd Faculties in illustrious Whoredom, above any Woman of her Time, is Popular among the lower Sett of People in this Town; and *Madam Maintenon*, for ruling him that had the arbitrary Rule of *France*, among the higher and lower People not only of that, but many other neighbouring Nations.

Among Clergymen, there is *Oates*, as famous for his Plots in *England* as *Alberoni* for all his Mines. *Hind*, and the Golden-Farmer, *Marlborough*, and *Cutts* in *England*, *Cartouch* and the Duke of *Berwick* in *France*, have all of them had their several Shares of Popularity, the Thieves as well as the Generals. As for Kings themselves, they have had Usurpers and Assassins their Competitors in Popularity; for where has the Name of any King of *England* been heard of that the Name of *Oliver Cromwell* has not reach'd; and Nobody
ever

INTRODUCTION.

ever mention'd the expiring *Henry* the 4th of *France* without reviving the Memory of *Racillac*; nay one Man, by a most remarkable Action, has render'd himself as much the Subject of a popular Discourse as a whole State. For who ever heard of *Naples*, and not of its Fisherman *Massinello*? Nay, he has made himself so popular, that it is hard to hear the One talk'd of, without thinking of the Other. If you go to the Saints themselves, you'll find it the same; *Mary Magdalen* was as Popular in her jovial Harlottry as she was in her Christian Tears; *Saul* for his Persecution of the Gospel, as *Paul* for his Propagation of it; King *David* for his Adultery as for his Repentance; and his Son *Solomon* for his innumerable Follies, when he acted them, as for his immense Wisdom when he corrected them. Each of these Men were Popular in their Way, by having their Followers and Admirers on the One Side, and those that hated and despis'd them on the Other. For there will be always Numbers of Men that will love distinguish'd, that is, Popular Vices, and hate great Virtue, as well as Numbers that will endeavour to make Virtue Popular, which Numbers of others will as surely hate. Therefore Praise or Dispraise, upon these Subjects, is ridiculous, and thence it comes that Partiality is banish'd out of History. *Oliver Cromwell*, who was as Popular a Man as any

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any I have named, was sensible of this: He being extreamly Huzza'd by the Populace when he was going to the Parliament House, and his Cousin *Waller* in the Coach with him, being ask'd by Him, How he relish'd those loud Applauses? He answer'd, with a Smile, *If I was going to Tyburn, their shouts would be every jot as loud, if not louder.* Thus, since if popular Persons were alive, they little value what is said of them, an Historian must be very weak if he is partial in the Story of a Popular Person that is dead: And therefore you may expect an impartial Account from me of the Person who is the Subject of the following Pages.



T H E



T H E
L I F E

O F

Christopher Layer, Esq;



Christopher Layer was the Son of *John Layer* (and *Anne* his Wife) an eminent Lace-Man in *Durham-Yard* in the *Strand*, in the Parish of *St. Martin's* in the *Fields*, where he was born on the 12th and baptiz'd the 22d Day of *November*, in the Year 1683. His Father, some Years after, remov'd into *King's-Street* in *Covent-Garden*, where he died.

his

His Father's elder Brother, *Christopher Layer*, Esq; a Gentleman of about 1000*l.* *per Annum* in the County of *Norfolk*, and a Batchelor, was his Godfather; who being fond of his Nephew and Name-sake, took him from his Father in his Childhood, and put him to Board with Mr. *Barnard*, a Barber, in *Norwich*. He was taught to read by Mr. *King*, afterwards was sent to learn *Latin, &c.* at the Free-School, of which the Reverend Mr. *John Burton* was Master; and was instructed in Writing and Accompts by Mr. *Leverington*: His Uncle resolving to spare no Cost for the Advantage of his Education.

He was observ'd to be very dull at his Book, but in his Temper, splenetick, malicious, and revengeful. Nor was he less remarkable for his cowardly Disposition, in suffering himself to be insulted and beaten by every Boy that was inclin'd to quarrel with him: And one Instance I shall give, of which a particular Friend of mine was an Eye-Witness, of a Lad, whose Name was *Chappel*, who though younger, and much lesser Siz'd than himself, yet bang'd him very heartily; *Layer*, in Revenge, some Time after, watch'd his Opportunity, and, in cool Blood, came behind *Chappel* and basely stuck his Pen-knife up to the Hilt in his Back, at the School-Door.

His

His kind, indulgent Uncle, when he arriv'd to the Age of Seventeen, put him out Clerk to Mr. *Repingale*, an eminent Attorney at *Aylesham* in the County of *Norfolk*, in which Profession, contrary to expectation, he prov'd a tolerable Proficient.

Before he was out of his Clerkship, his Uncle who was a very great Sportsman, and fast Liver, had run out, and sold near two Thirds of his Estate, having left himself only about 400*l.* per *Annum*, which, being intail'd, must have devolv'd to his Nephew and Godson, as the only Heir Male of the Family.

This ESTATE, as it was not in his Power to sell, and finding himself press'd for the Payment of some considerable Debts, to prevent the ill Consequences of a Failure, he made a Proposal to his Nephew *Christopher*, who was then just at Age, to grant him present Possession of the said 400*l.* per *Annum*, on Condition that he would supply him with 1000*l.* ready Money, to clear his Debts, and to allow him 100*l.* per *Annum* during Life, to be paid Quarterly. To this Proposal Mr. *Laver* readily agreed, procur'd his Uncle 1000*l.* got into Possession of his Estate, but never had the Honour or Honesty to pay any Part of the Annuity.

By being possess'd of this Estate, he grew proud, haughty, and negligent of his Master's

ster's Business; which occasion'd so great a Difference between them, that his Master desir'd him to pack up his Awls and be gone, and told him he would freely give him out the rest of his Clerkship. This Offer Mr. *Layer* readily embrac'd; but, at the same Time, insolently answer'd his Master, That there were some MOVEABLES belonging to him, which as they would not bear *packing up*, he desir'd he might take away *loose*: And being ask'd by his Master, What MOVEABLES he meant? He reply'd; *Two Children, which you fondly suppose are your own, but were actually got by me.* This caus'd a Confusion in that Family, such as could never after be appeas'd.

After this, Mr. *Layer* finding that the Generality of People were not fond of employing a Person who had not serv'd his full Time, and consequently not capable of Business, he came up to *London*, and apply'd himself to Mr. *Hadley Doyley*, of *Furnival's-Inn*, and officiated under him for some Time. When he thought himself fully quallify'd, he return'd to *Norfolk*, where he had very good Business, as an Attorney: But being puff'd up with Pride and Ambition, he could not be contented in that Practice, thinking it too low a Sphere for a Man of his Estate to move in, he therefore procur'd himself, by Dint of Money, to be call'd to the Bar, but the
true

true Reason of his losing his Business as an Attorney, and having little or none as a Counsellor, was his tricking and ill-using his Clients and Neighbours; his Pride and Expectations thus baulk'd at Home, he took a Resolution of travelling to *Rome*, to pay a Visit to the Pretender.

As for his Uncle, thus basely and ungenerously defrauded of his Annuity, he was, for several Years after, maintain'd by the Contribution and Hospitality of those Gentlemen who were his Fellow-Sportsmen, and always kept his Pack of Fox-Hounds, which being esteem'd the best Breed in *Europe*, he, by selling such as he could spare, and warrant to be good, and the Contributions abovesaid, he liv'd well to the very last; content with every Thing but the Ill-usage of his ungrateful Nephew; who, if at any Time talk'd of, the old Gentleman would say, *Mention him not now to disturb Company: You'll have Time enough to talk of him when he is hanged; for hanged I prophesy he will be: And if that happens before he's bless'd with an Heir, the Fool may have his Mare again.*

Another Motive which might induce him to go Abroad was, to avoid the Consequence of an Indictment which Mr. *Snell*, an eminent Attorney at Law in *Norwich*, had prepar'd, and was determin'd to pre-

for against him as a Common Barteter, i. e. for being a Promoter and Encourager of litigious and vexatious Law Suits; of which, as he knew himself but too guilty, and that by his Actions and Behaviour he had brought upon himself the Ill-will of his Countrymen, he was sensible a *Norfolk* Jury, who are not easily brib'd, would certainly have given a Verdict against Him.

He marry'd Mrs. *Elizabeth Erskine of Aylesham*, beforemention'd, a Gentlewoman descended of a very good Family, and who brought him a very considerable Fortune; and it is much to be lamented, that so worthy a Family should be disgrac'd both by his Life and Death.

His Wife, out of her great, tho' underserv'd Affection for him, was content to be sent Abroad upon his vile Errands.

But because I will not be charged with the least Tincture of Partiality, I will faithfully transcribe from the *Appendix to the Report*, &c. the very silly Account he gives of his own Motives for Travelling.

* He acknowledg'd, That he was bred up in *Norfolk*, under an Uncle, who was a *Non Juror*, and having Expectations of an Estate from that Uncle, he imbibed those Principles early, and upon coming into the World, observed various Opinions entertain'd concerning this King and the Other. That having a particular Affair to transact between

* See the Appendix, &c.

between Lord *Tarmouth* and Lord *London-derry*, he had learnt that a Sister of Lord *Tarmouth's* was married to a *Venetian* Minister, residing here in King *Charles* the Second's Time; that a Portion of six Thousand Pounds was settled on that Lady, which he saw Reason to believe was never paid; and that having heard from *John Plunket* (who sometimes went by the Name of *Rogers*) of a Son of this Lady's, who was formerly at *Utrecht*, and talked of coming over hither to solicit this Affair, he thought it might be an acceptable Service to that Gentleman, to acquaint him with the Nature and Circumstances of that Demand. That this Affair, and a natural Inclination and Curiosity which he had always had to see the *Pretender*, whom he had heard so much of, carried him into *Italy*; that he set out from *England* on the 1st of *April* 1721, and went first to *Venice*, where he met with Seignior *Alberti de Conti*, Son to the *Venetian* Minister above-mention'd, who thanked him for the Trouble he had given himself, but told him he was already acquainted with the Particulars of the Demand relating to his Mother's Portion, and intended to come over to solicit that Affair himself. That he, *Laver*, finding himself now within three or four hundred Miles of *Rome*, resolv'd to

go thither, arriv'd there about the End of May, 1721, and staid there about five Weeks.

That as it is the Custom for all *English* Gentlemen who are at *Rome*, to visit any of their own Nation, on their first Arrival there, some of the *English* who were there in their Travels, came to visit him, but that he desiring to be *incognito*, order'd his Servant to deny him. That after he had been a Day at *Rome*, he sent to *Francis Kennedy*, Secretary to the *Pretender*, to let him know he should be glad to see him, and to renew his Acquaintance with him. Being ask'd, when and where he first became acquainted with *Francis Kennedy*? He says, that *Kennedy* had a Brother, Secretary to the late Duke of *Ormond*, with which Brother he had some Acquaintance, and he thinks he has formerly been in *Francis Kennedy's* Company at *London*, along with the other Brother; but as to this Particular, he cannot be positive.

That upon his sending to *Francis Kennedy*, as above, the said *Kennedy* came to him at his Lodgings, which he, *Laver*, was surpriz'd at, it being in the Face of all the *English* Gentlemen; That he desired *Kennedy* to introduce him to the *Pretender*, which *Kennedy* promis'd to do; that the next Night *Kennedy* came to him again, and told him, he need not be uneasy,

easy, at his coming to his Lodgings openly, since he frequented the Company of all the *English* that came to *Rome*, without Distinction, but he would introduce him to the *Pretender* privately in an Evening, so that Nobody should be able to prove it. And he, *Layer*, farther saith, That at the same Time he believes *Kennedy* gave *Plunket* a Letter under the *Pretender's* own Hand, when *Kennedy* and *Plunket* were alone together; for the next Day Morning, as he, *Layer*, lay in Bed, in a Room next adjoining to that where *Plunket* lodged, *Plunket* came to *Layer's* Bed-side, and told him with seeming Satisfaction, that he had got a Letter under the King's own Hand, meaning the *Pretender's*; but *Kennedy* never said one Word of this Letter to *Layer*. The said *Plunket* shew'd him the Letter, the whole of which he, *Layer*, takes to have been writ in the same Hand in which the Blank Receipts, taken among his Papers at Mrs. *Mason's*, were sign'd, which he believes to be the *Pretender's* own Hand. That the Substance of the Letter was, That the Bearer, *Francis Kennedy*, would introduce *Plunket* to the *Pretender*. He, *Layer*, saith, He cannot be positive, whether it was said in the Letter that *Kennedy* would introduce *Plunket* only, or whether he himself was likewise mention'd, as to be introduc'd to the

the Pretender by Kennedy. That he, Laver, believes, and was inform'd by Plunket, that he, Plunket, saw the Pretender the Night before he, Laver, was introduced to him. That Kennedy told him, the next Day the King (meaning the Pretender) would be busy receiving Visits, but he, Laver, should come at Ten at Night, and walk without in the Square before the Pretender's House, where Colonel Hays and Kennedy would meet him. That he accordingly went thither, and was met by Hays and Kennedy, who conducted him up a Pair of back Stairs into a long Gallery, and thro' several Rooms. That Hays went into a Room beyond, and coming out again, presently carry'd Laver in to the Pretender, whom Laver saluted. That the Pretender ask'd the Occasion of his coming, and enquir'd much of him, whether he had any Credentials from People in England? That Laver answer'd, Nothing but Curiosity, and a Desire of paying my Duty to your Majesty, has brought me hither. That the Pretender ask'd him, What Lords he knew? To which he answer'd, None but those he was concern'd with in the Way of his Profession. That the Pretender said, What have you no Credential or Recommendation at all, from any Person in England? This Journey must have been very expensive to you, I believe it cannot cost
you

you less than Five Hundred Pounds. To which he reply'd, that a private Affair which brought him to *Venice*, would have defray'd the Expence, if it had succeeded; but that having miscarried in That, his Inclination drew him on to *Rome*, to pay his Duty to the *Pretender*, and that he had long had it in his Thoughts and Inclinations to pay his Duty to him, so took this Opportunity of doing it. That one *Plunket*, who was now along with him, had often told him, *Layr*, that he need not fear being introduced; or to that Effect. So he, *Layr*, said, he presumed to come to pay his Respects. That then the *Pretender* ask'd him which way he came, and who conducted him in his Travels? To which he answer'd, that the said *Plunket* was instead of a Governour to him, speaking several Languages. Upon which the *Pretender* said, I believe that *Plunket* is a very honest Man, and as proper a Person as you could have had for a Companion. That the *Pretender* again express'd himself surprized at his having no Recommendation from any Persons in *England*, but said, I am inform'd by *Francis Kennedy*, who knows you, that you have a very good Character; and for that Reason you are welcome without any Credentials. That the *Pretender* then asked him what Country he was of, what Relations

lations and Friends he had? He replied, that he was of *Norfolk*, that he was bred up there under his Uncle, who, with Sir *Nicholas L'Estrange*, were the only two old *Non Jurors* in that County. That the *Pretender* asked him, what other *Norfolk* Gentlemen he knew? To which he answered, That he knew all the *Tories*. That the *Pretender* asked him, if he could recollect their Names, and put them down in Writing? That he, *Layer*, answered, He could easily do that, for that he had brought with him *Memorandums* of their Names; and that accordingly he, *Layer*, drew up a fair List of the *Tory* Gentlemen of *Norfolk*, (there might be for aught he knows some *Suffolk* Gentlemen in it, Borderers upon *Norfolk*) and he, *Layer*, at the second Interview with the *Pretender*, gave the said List to the *Pretender*, thinking it would be acceptable to him, they being Persons, whom he, *Layer*, look'd on as well inclined to the *Pretender's* Interest.

That he saw the *Pretender* a second Time. That the *Pretender* then asked him, whether he would not see the Queen, (meaning his Spouse) and promised she should admit him, *Layer*; to kiss her Hand.

That about three Weeks or a Month after, *Kennedy* came again to *Layer*, and invited

Invited him to meet him in the same Place, in Order to see the *Pretender's* Spouse. That *Haye* and *Kennedy* introduced him to her, and that he kissed her Hand. That the *Pretender*, and she, discoursed him again about his Travels, and what he had seen at *Rome*. That the *Pretender* call'd him to him, and ask'd him whether he had any Thing to say in Relation to his List? That *Layer* said, I forgot something which I had to communicate to your Majesty. Upon which the *Pretender* said that his Wife would go out of the Room presently; and soon after spoke to her in *Italian* (to withdraw, as *Layer* believes) Upon which *Col. Haye* came in, and led her out. That the *Pretender* then sat down, and asked *Layer* what he had to say? That the Door being open, *Layer* look'd that Way, and the *Pretender* bid him shut it; that he then came and stood over against the *Pretender*, and began to speak; but the *Pretender* being at that Time somewhat thick of Hearing, rose, and bid him walk with him. That *Layer* then said to the *Pretender*, I have nothing so material to offer, as ought to have procured me this great Honour and Indulgence from your Majesty, but if there be any Service upon Earth, I can do, I am most ready. That the *Pretender* said,

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what can you do? Have you any Acquaintance? To which he replied, That all the Persons mention'd in his List, were intirely devoted to the *Pretender's* Interest, and all the Gentlemen in *England* the same, except those in Places of Profit and Trust; and that all Parties were united in his, the *Pretender's* Interest. That the *Pretender* then ask'd him, What the Gentlemen were, whose Names were in his List? To which he reply'd, They were all *Tories*; and that he had not put down any of the *Roman Catholicks* of *Norfolk*, of whom there were several Men of Estates. That the *Pretender* said, he believ'd the People in *England* were generally well inclin'd to his Cause, and pretty well convinc'd of their Error; Then spoke of the Discontents occasion'd by the *South Sea*; of Lord *Marlborough's* Weakness and Indisposition; and enquir'd, to whom that great Estate was likely to go. That the *Pretender* afterwards said, You are very kind, and you may depend on any Service I can do you. That *Laver* reply'd, As I have not the Happiness to be acquainted with any of the Nobility in *England*, if your Majesty would do me the Honour to give me some Token, by which I may introduce myself to their Acquaintance, I will employ all my Labour and Industry, to serve your Majesty. That the *Pretender*

der said, he should be glad to give him any Token of his Kindness. That he, *Layer*, desired the Queen (meaning the *Pretender's* Spouse) would do him the Honour to stand Godmother to his Child, as a Means and sufficient Token, for giving him Credit with People of Quality in *England*, in the *Pretender's* Interest. That the *Pretender* said he must consider of it, and would send him an Answer. Then enquired of him how long he should stay? To which he reply'd, I have no other Business here, but to pay my Duty to your Majesty, and intend to set out in two Days. That the *Pretender* enquired what Route he intended to take, advis'd him against going thro' *France*, on Account of the *Plague*, and (*Layer* having before made Application to him, for his Passport to go thro' *France*) the *Pretender* said, they would not let even Me pass that way; then enquir'd, whether *Plunket* went back with him? To which *Layer* answer'd, that he did; being necessary to him on Account of the Languages. That then the *Pretender* wish'd him a good Journey, and said he would send him an Answer in Relation to the Christening the next Day. That accordingly the next Day Colonel *Haye* came to him, and told him, that the *Pretender's* Spouse consented to stand Godmother to his Child. That *Layer*

desired some Token, by which he might apply to some Person of Quality in *England* to represent her, and that the *Pretender* would name some Lord, or Person of Distinction in *England*, to stand with her; and he, *Layer*, desir'd to know, whether the Dutchess of *Ormond* would not be agreeable to the *Pretender's* Spouse, to represent her at the Christening? That Colonel *Haye* answer'd, The Dutchess of *Ormond* would be a proper Person to represent her; that no Letter could be sent by *Layer*, but Care would be taken the Dutchess of *Ormond* should represent the *Pretender's* Spouse at the Christening. That Colonel *Haye* said, You will need no other Token, than to tell the Dutchess that her Husband is well, and gone to *Madrid*. That *Haye* farther said, the *Pretender* would not Name any Lord to stand Godfather with her, but would himself stand Godfather, with his Spouse, to *Layer's* Child; and that he, *Layer*, must get some Lord in *England* to represent the *Pretender*, at the Christening of the Child.

That he, *Layer*, left *Rome* about the Beginning of *July*, 1721, and return'd to *England* the latter End of *August*, or the Beginning of *September* following.

That upon his Return he waited upon the Dutchess of *Ormond*, and desir'd her to stand Godmother to his Child, adding, that
he

he hop'd her Grace was not altogether a Stranger to that Affair. That her Grace made him no particular Answer, but promis'd him to stand, as desir'd.

That he then made Application to Lord Orrery, by *Szwortfeger*, Lord Orrery's Secretary, and by *Thompson*, whom he took to be Chaplain to the Dutchess of Ormond, and to be acquainted with Lord Orrery, as he knew he was with *Szwortfeger*, to desire that Lord Orrery would stand Godfather to his Child, with the Dutchess of Ormond. That he believes Lord Orrery knew that he was desir'd to stand for the Pretender, and that *Thompson* knew the same by *Szwortfeger*. That hereupon Lord Orrery sent to the Dutchess of Ormond, to know whether she intended to stand, who sent him Word, she did; that, however, Lord Orrery desir'd to be excused; but afterwards, upon farther Acquaintance with *Layer*, and upon hearing that Lord North and Grey had consented to stand, Lord Orrery sent to him, *Layer*, to make Excuses for this Refusal. That he, *Layer*, made this Application to Lord Orrery, having heard that he was in the Pretender's Interest; and hoping to make Use of this Credential with Lord Orrery, to induce him to converse freely with him, in Relation to the Pretender's Affairs.

He,

He, *Laver*, farther saith, That he was not at that Time acquainted with Lord *North* and *Grey*, any farther than by having been twice to wait on him in Relation to a Cause depending in the *House of Lords*, about an Estate of the Lord *Kingston's*, of *Ireland*. That upon Lord *Orrery's* declining to be Godfather to his Child, he went to Lord *North* and *Grey*, and told him, the *Duchess of Ormond* had promised to stand Godmother to his Child, that he desired the Favour of his Lordship to stand with her Grace; and that if he would be pleased to see her Grace, she would acquaint his Lordship with Particulars. That my Lord *North* said, he would wait on her Grace the next Day, and if she would stand, he would. That he, *Laver*, believes my Lord *North* understood he was to stand for the *Pretender*. That this Transaction was the Beginning of his Intimacy with Lord *North* and *Grey*; that the *Duchess of Ormond's* Illness, during the Winter, occasioned the Christening to be deferred till the *Easter* following, at which Time her Grace being well enough to go to *Chelsea*, appointed a Day for the Christening, with which he, *Laver*, acquainted Lord *North* by Letter; that in the *Easter-Holy-Days* his Child was Christened by *Thompson* abovemention'd, at Mrs. *Fox's* Lodgings at
Chelsea,

Chelsea, and named *Mary Clementina*; Nobody being present but the *Dutchess of Ormond*, *Lord North*, *Mr. Thompson*, and *Layer* and his Wife, and *Mrs. Fox*, as he believes; but of this last he can't be positive.

Mr. Layer return'd to *England* by the Way of *Holland*, for I find one Letter from his Wife dated *Aug. 10. 1721*, then in *France*, directed to him to *Rotterdam*.* In which Letter, among several other Particulars, she tells him, that if he would but send her 12 Yards of *Edging* (for a Suit of Head-cloaths) he would much oblige her. So bare did he keep her of decent Necessaries, notwithstanding the Honour of her Family, and the Fortune she brought him.

He sent his Wife a Letter from *London*, dated *July 29, 1722*,† wherein “ he congratulates her safe Arrival at *Paris*. — “ Says that he left *Norfolk* just after their Absizes. — Hoped that his Affairs would “ permit him to make a Trip to *France* “ to fetch her Home. — Desir'd to know “ how she lik'd the Place, and how she “ had dispos'd of his Daughter *Nanny*.

To this Letter *Mrs. Layer* return'd him the following Answer,** dated *August 12. N. S.* My

* See the Appendix, &c. † Ut supra. ** Ut supra.

My Dear,

ON *Wednesday* last I got safe to *Paris*, and have a Lodging very near charming Lady *Liffgoe*, She answers the Character Mr. *Plunket* gave her exactly, but that troublesome Creature Mrs. *Fox*, is got into the same House with me, that I cannot be so often at that good Lady's, as I should be; it has cost me 20 Guineas before I got to *Paris*. I acquainted Lady *Liffgoe* with what Money I have, she says I must have thirty Pounds more return'd; every Thing here is three Times as dear as usually, I must pay a Quarter before-hand for *Nanny*. I beg you'd return it as soon as possible, for I design to begin my Journey in three Weeks, and to go from *Diepe* to *London* by Ship, there will be one Mr. *More's* Ship go about that Time, a very civil Man. My humble Service as due,

I am

Your affectionate Wife,

Nanny gives her

Duty to you.

E. LAYER.

On the 25th Day of *August*, 1722, at a Meeting at *Layton-Stone*, in *Essex*, Mr. *Layer*, with other of his Accomplices, Inlisted several Persons for the Service of

of the *Pretender*, in a few Days after, he was apprehended, and taken into Custody by Mr. *Squire*, one of his Majesty's Messengers, from whom he made his Escape on the 19th of *September*, but was retaken in *St. George's-Fields* the same Day, and the next, committed to the Tower.

October 31, He was arraign'd at the King's Bench Bar, on an *Indictment for High Treason, in compassing and imagining the Death of the KING, found by the Grand Jury for the County of Essex, before special Commissioners of Oyer and Terminer*. To this Indictment he pleaded *Not Guilty*, was remanded back to the Tower, and order'd by the Court to be brought up again on *November 3d* to take his Tryal, which was accordingly done. But upon his desiring a longer Time to prepare for his Tryal, the Court indulged him therein, to the 21st of *Novem.* when he was again brought up, in Order to his Tryal; and after the most impartial Hearing, and the fullest Proof, the Jury brought him in *Guilty* of the *High Treason*, wherewith he stood charged. After which, the Lord Chief Justice proceeded to pass Sentence on him, in these Words, *viz.*

Christopher Layer, You have been Indicted, and after a long Examination and
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fair Tryal, have been convicted of High Treason, in compassing and imagining the Death of the King.

You have had all the Indulgence and Advantage that the Law would allow you. You have had Counsel assigned you of your own chusing, to advise you preparatory to your Tryal, and to assist you in making your Defence at your Tryal.

These Counsel have been permitted to say whatever they thought proper for your Service; and I heartily wish that I could say that they had not exceeded, that they had not taken a greater Liberty than they ought to have done: But however that was, the Court thought fit to permit it in them, that they might not be discourag'd in offering any Thing that was proper for your Defence; we did not censure it then, on this Consideration.

The Jury that have found you guilty, are such as may be justly said you yourself approv'd of; for, though the Law gives you a Liberty of challenging five and thirty, you challenged but four and thirty; so you allowed the rest to be an indifferent Jury, to pass between the King and you as to your Life and Death.

The Evidence on which you have been convicted, is the clearest and plainest that ever I heard: Your personal Conferences with the Pretender at *Rome*; your constant

stant Correspondence with him and his Agents afterwards; the Scheme you had form'd for the executing this Treason; your Confession of the greatest Part of it before the Lords of the Council; and at last your Flight when in the Hands of Justice, out of a Window two Pair of Stairs, and the Endeavours you used when retaken to corrupt and prevail with those that took you, by Rewards, to let you go off; these are Matters so very clear and plain, and did concur so exactly with the Evidence of the Witnesses, that it did not rest on their Credit; the only Question was, whether the Jury did believe what you yourself had declared on your Examination before the Lords of the Council, and by the Scheme that was found in your Custody.

This being the Nature of the Evidence, I must, according to what is usual; put you in Mind of the horrid Wickedness you have been found guilty of.

The first Matter projected to be done, was to seize the Tower of *London*, to set a Guard at the *Exchange* and other Places; to seize the Bank, and take from thence what Money you had Occasion for; by which the whole City of *London*, and in Consequence the whole Nation, would inevitably have been involv'd in Blood and

Confusion : This was to have been the first Fruits of this projected Scheme.

The next Step to be taken by this execrable Scheme, was to seize the Sacred Person of the King: A King, who during the whole Course of his Reign hath been the most Religious Observer of our Laws, the most careful Preserver and Protector of all our Civil and Religious Rights, and the most merciful Prince that ever sat on the Throne of these Kingdoms; yet this, this most excellent Prince, was to be seized and made a Sacrifice to Popery and Arbitrary Power.

The next Step to be taken, was to seize the Prince; and when that was done, Nobody can doubt but the young Prince and Princesses must and should have follow'd the Fate of their Father: So that the Project must and would have ended in the Destruction of all the Royal Family on this Side the Water; and when that was done, 'twas thought 'twould be an easy Matter to set the *Pretender* on the Throne.

This being done, the King and the Royal Family destroy'd, and the *Pretender* advanced to the Throne, what the Consequence of that must and would have been is obvious to every Body; it must have ended in the entire Destruction and Dissolution of our most happy Establishment
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and Constitution ; the happiest, I think, that ever any People enjoy'd : It must have ended in the Destruction of our Laws, our Liberties, our Religion, and the Church of *England* as by Law establish'd ; and we must have become, from the most happy the most miserable People on Earh.

These horrid and execrable Designs are so very heinous in themselves, that they hardly will admit of any Circumstance of Aggravation : But I must say, I can't avoid saying, that there are Circumstances with Respect to you that make them more heinous, if possible. You were bred up to the Law, and you must be supposed to know the Excellency of our happy Constitution and Government, and the Laws which you professed ; which makes your Crime much the greater.

Another Matter, which is a greater Aggravation of your Offence, is, that you were, or at least professed yourself a Protestant, and a Member of the Church of *England*, whilst you engaged yourself in Measures which must inevitably have destroy'd that Church which you profess yourself a Member of.

These are the Treasons which you are convicted of ; and being so, the Law adjudges you not fit to Live ; and the Judgment

ment of the Law is, and it is consider'd by the Court, that You, Christopher Layer, be led to the Place from whence you came, and from thence you are to be drawn to the Place of Execution, and there you are to be hang'd by the Neck, but not till you are dead, but you are to be cut down alive, and your Bowels to be taken out, and burnt before your Face; your Head is to be sever'd from your Body, and your Body to be divided into four Quarters; and that your Head and Quarters be dispos'd of where His Majesty shall think fit. And the Lord have Mercy upon your Soul.

I have prov'd beyond Contradiction, the base Practices of which Mr. Layer has been guilty, before he commenc'd a Traitor to his Majesty King GEORGE, to whom he swore *Allegiance*, and *abjur'd* the *Pre-tender*. Yet upon his Tryal he had the Assurance to declare, *That he could lay his Hand upon his Heart, and say, he had done nothing against his Conscience**: (Perjury with him being no Sin.) And as arrogantly told the Lord Chief Justice, that he would *dare to die like a Gentleman and a Christian*. † If *Perjury* and *Prevarication* are Preparatives to a happy Death,

* See his Tryal, P. 2,

† Ut supra P. 151.

Death, I cannot by any Means join in Mr. Layer's System of Religion. His Perjury is upon Record in the same Court wherein he was convicted a Traitor; and of his Prevarication, there need not, I dare say, in the Eyes of all impartial Men, be produc'd more convincing Arguments than the Attestations hereunto subjoined.



A Declaration sign'd by Archibald Hutcheson, Esq; and given to several of his Acquaintance, soon after he had perus'd the Examination of Christopher Layer, in the Appendix to the Report of the Secret Committee; in which Layer has made Mention of His Name, as One of Burford's Club; which the said Layer, in his Examination, saith, he was told by one Plunket.

March 4. 1722

HAVING read Part of the Examination of Layer of the 19th of January and 4th of February last, in the Appendix to the Report of the Secret

cret Committee, in which *Layer* is mentioned to have said, That one *Plunket* told him, as explaining what was meant by *Burford's Club*, That Lord *Orrery* was Chairman, and that this *Club* met Monthly, at one another's Houses, as *Layer* thought; and that *Plunket* told him, That there were Eight other Lords and Six Commoners (whose Names he mentions, and Mine as one of them) of that *Club*: I do hereby declare, upon the Honour of a Gentleman, That I do not know, or believe, that there was a Club or Meeting of any of the Lords or Gentlemen mentioned in the said Examination, nor have I ever heard of any Meeting where Lord *Orrery* was present, except that which was carried on in the Two last Sessions of Parliament, when Lord *Orrery*, and several Lords and Gentlemen (not mentioned in *Layer's* Examination) met Weekly, and, I believe, with great Innocence, Din'd at one another's Houses. And I do farther affirm, That even on accidental Visits, I have seldom met together any Two of the Lords and Commoners so mention'd in *Layer's* Examination: That there are Two of these Commoners (Sir *Henry Goring* and Mr. *Darwkins*) whose Faces I do not know; and Two others (General *Webb* and Sir *Constantine Phipps*) between whom and me there hath not been, for Fifteen Years last

last pass'd, the Intercourse even of Ceremonial Visits; and between me and the Fifth Commoner (*Mr. Shippen*) but very seldom: That there are Three of those Lords (*Scarsdale, Craven, Goswer*) with whom I have very little Acquaintance; a Fourth (*Lord Bingley*) whom I have never met any where but in Visits to others, or in publick Places; and a Fifth (*the Bishop of Rochester*) in whose Company I have been but twice in Three Years Time. I mention this to shew the Notorious Falshood of *Laver's Hear-say Evidence of Burford's Club*, an Appellation I never heard of till some Time after the Appointment of the *Secret Committee*.

ARCH. HUTCHESON,



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The Declaration of William Earl Cowper, shewing, that the Matters contained in some Hear-says, relating to him, in the Examinations of Christopher Layer, are false and groundless.

March 20. 1722.

THO' *Hear-say* does not affect any one, either in Law or Reason, yet it deserves Contradiction, where the Truth will bear it, especially if Printed: And therefore, finding that *Layer* in his Examinations of the 19th of *January* and 4th of *February* last, hath said, That one *Plunket* told him (as explaining what was meant by *Burford's Club*) that Lord *Or-rery* was Chairman; and that Lord *Cowper* and Seven other Lords, and Six Commoners named, were of that *Club*; and that this *Club* met Monthly; As he, *Layer*, thought, at one another's Houses: And not doubting but my *Averment* will be believ'd before any *Hear-say*, especially from one in *Layer's* sad Circumstances; I do hereby
declare

declare and affirm upon my Honour, That I do not know, or believe, and never heard, before the said Examinations were talk'd of, that there was any such *Club* or *Meeting*: That as to Three of the Commoners nam'd, *viz.* Sir *H. Goring*, Mr. *Dawkins*, and Mr. *Shippen*, I do not know them so much as by Sight; and as for Two of the remaining Three Commoners, *viz.* Sir *Constantine Phipps* and General *Webb*, I have not been in their, or either of their Companies, at any Time within Sixteen Years last past: And as to the Lords, I never met them, or any of them, but either accidentally on Visits of Ceremony, or in the Time of Parliament, and that with other Lords on the Business of Parliament only: And as for one of the said Commoners whom I am acquainted with, *viz.* Mr. *Hutcheson*, I never once was at any Meeting with him together with any of the said Lords or Commoners. And whereas *Layer* in his Examination of the 19th of *September* last, said, That Lord *Orrery* told him, that Lord *Cowper* told him (Lord *Orrery*) that 200 *Tories* and 90 *Grumbletonians*, would try their last Effort in the House of Commons; and in another Examination of the 21st Day of the same Month, *Layer* repeats the same, except that he useth the Words *Angry Whigs*, instead of the Word

Grumbletonians: I do hereby declare and affirm upon my Honour, That I never said so to Lord *Orrery*, nor to that Effect, nor any Thing like it: And I do therefore verily believe, that Lord *Orrery* never said that I did.

C O W P E R.



The first Rule of Court made for Mr. *Lager's* Execution, was on the 12th Day of *December* 1722. But by the earnest Sollicitations of his Friends, and the very pressing Instances of his Wife; his Majesty, from the Representations of the Secretaries of State, was most graciously pleased to Respite him many Times. The Ministry were in Hopes of his making a candid Confession, instead of which, he only continued his Prevarications with them, and endeavour'd to insnare several Persons of the greatest Honour and Worth. So that at length a Rule of Court was made for his Execution on the 17th Day of *May*, 1723: On which Day he was drawn upon a Sledge from the *Tower* to *Tyburn*: He ask'd the Executioner, whether *his Body was to be Quarter'd?* Who upon

upon making him no direct Answer, he said, *He hoped he had taken Care of his Soul, and therefore cared not what was done to his Body.* He deliver'd a Paper to the Under-Sheriff, and address'd himself to the Spectators, to this Effect.

I come here to suffer an Ignominious Death; not for an Ignominious Crime, but for following the Dictates of my Conscience, and endeavouring to do my Duty. As I die for so doing, I doubt not, but I shall soon be happy: — But am certain this Nation can never be so, nor even easy, until their lateful King is plac'd upon his Throne. I forgive every Body, and desire Forgiveness from God, for my Sins, and from Men for what Injuries I may have done them.

His Quarters were permitted to be buried at KENSINGTON, and his Head is fix'd on a Pole upon Temple-Bar.



POSTSCRIPT.

AMONG the many bad Actions Mr. Laver did in the Practice of the Law, one good one that he did was much taken Notice of, and applauded, viz. His

vindicating the Honour of his Sister, in Regard to Mr. *Watson* a wealthy Citizen and Upholsterer in *London*; who had address'd her, as she thought, in an honourable Way, but what he profess'd afterwards was otherwise, and he refus'd to marry her. Mr. *Layer* being made acquainted with it, at his Return from Travel, and finding his Sister had been impos'd upon, and by thinking Mr. *Watson* sincere, had refused other good Matches, to her Detriment; Mr. *Layer* commenc'd a Suit against him, prov'd the Courtship, and a Promise of Marriage, and obtain'd a Verdict for 1000*l*. Damages, and Costs of Suit.

The Account publish'd by the Ordinary of *Newgate* is as false, as it is ridiculous; Mrs. *Repingale*, Mr. *Layer*'s Master's Wife, whom he had defamed, being not dead, but now lives, and her Son with her, in the Cathedral-Close at *Norwich*.

I was not at the Execution, but one of the Sheriff's Officers assured me, that what I have inserted, is the Purport of what Mr. *Layer* spoke to the People.

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Next will be publish'd, THE CASE of *George Kelly*, impartially Related. From his Examination, to the Passing of the Bill against him. Price 1*s*.

There is likewise preparing for the Press, MEMOIRS of the LIFE of Dr. FRANCIS ATTERBURY, Lord Bishop of *Rockester*.

